

are most worthy of our admiration. His life of service is to be commended, and his legacy serves as an inspiration to us all.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2013

SPEECH OF

HON. PHIL GINGREY

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 17, 2012

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 4310) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2013 for military activities of the Department of Defense, to prescribe military personnel strengths for fiscal year 2013, and for other purposes:

Mr. GINGREY of Georgia. Mr. Chair, I rise in strong support of the Granger Amendment #44 to H.R. 4310 that was included in the En Bloc Amendment #3. As one of the co-chairs of the Congressional Taiwan Caucus, I believe this amendment embodies the spirit of the Taiwan Relations Act of 1979 in providing assistance to Taiwan for its own defense.

Through the TRA, we are able to conduct arms sales to Taipei. Over the past 30 years, we have done this time and time again. Unfortunately, the Obama Administration has failed to proceed on Taiwan's top request—the F-16 C/D aircraft. Taiwan has an aging fixed wing aircraft fleet, and with the growing military gap across the Taiwan Strait, it is critical that we sell them this aircraft. The Granger Amendment does just that by requiring the President to move forward on the sale of no fewer than 66 F-16 C/Ds.

Mr. Chair, the Taiwan Caucus sent letters in 2010 and 2011 urging the White House to move forward on this matter. In 2010, 136 bipartisan Members signed that letter, and in 2011, 181 Members joined in the effort. Unfortunately, those letters were received with mostly silence. However, the White House cannot ignore this amendment.

I urge my colleagues to uphold our commitment to Taiwan and support the Granger Amendment.

RECOGNIZING THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF MR. CHRISTOPHER DORSEY

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 18, 2012

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, it is my esteemed privilege to recognize the achievements of Mr. Christopher Dorsey, who serves as the director of the Dillard Center for the Arts Jazz Ensemble. He is the recipient of the 2011 "Jazzonian" Excellence in Jazz Education Award.

Mr. Dorsey has been leading the Dillard High Jazz Ensemble to the sweet sounds of success in recent years. The Jazz Ensemble took first prize at the "Swing Central" jazz competition in Savannah, Georgia in both 2010 and 2011. Also in 2010, they took 2nd

place at the "Essentially Ellington" Jazz Band Competition. In 2011 and 2012, the Dillard Jazz Ensemble was awarded back-to-back first prize honors at the "Essentially Ellington" Jazz Band Competition at Lincoln Center in New York City.

Mr. Speaker, I am extremely proud of the success that both Christopher Dorsey and the Dillard Jazz Ensemble have attained under his leadership. I wish him and the program much continued success.

HONORING ARMY SPECIALIST JASON K. EDENS

HON. MARSHA BLACKBURN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 18, 2012

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, the greatest acts of true and chosen service require sacrifice. From time to time, these acts of sacrifice are small and yet noble. Then there are the moments where the act is total and complete, ultimate in its finality and lasting in its devotion. I rise today to honor Army Specialist Jason K. Edens for his fidelity to freedom and freedom's cause.

SpC. Edens was a 2007 graduate of Franklin High School. Determined to join the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation, he joined the Army to improve the chances of achieving his dream. He was deployed in the Global War on Terror and assigned to the 1st Squadron, 13th Cavalry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division in Fort Bliss, Texas. He was wounded in an enemy attack in Laghman province in Afghanistan and died at Walter Reed Hospital in Maryland.

A beloved member of the Williamson County community, Specialist Edens will be greatly missed by his wife, Ashley, his parents, his family, and all who knew him. I ask my colleagues to join with me in honoring SpC. Edens as we remember all those who have given the ultimate act of sacrifice for their country.

TRIBUTE TO DR. KENT L. BECHLER

HON. KEN CALVERT

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 18, 2012

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and pay tribute to an individual whose dedication and contributions to communities of Corona and Norco are exceptional. Our area has been fortunate to have dynamic and dedicated community leaders who willingly and unselfishly give their time and talent and make their communities a better place to live and work. Dr. Kent Bechler is one of these individuals. At a retirement reception on May 23, 2012, Kent will be honored for his work as the Corona-Norco Unified School District Superintendent.

For the last five years, Dr. Kent Bechler has been the superintendent of the Corona-Norco Unified School District (CNUSD), the ninth

largest school district in California serving more than 54,000 students. Prior to heading the Corona-Norco Unified School District, he served as superintendent in Walnut Valley Unified and Duarte Unified School Districts. Dr. Bechler has served K-12 education for 32 years.

Since assuming the CNUSD Superintendent position, he has guided the district through many challenges and many accomplishments. With collaboration and problem solving, the district has survived the state budget crisis by successfully implementing a retirement incentive program that eliminated the need to impose layoffs. To address overcrowding, the district opened two new elementary schools, and began expansion of campus facilities as six schools through modernization projects.

Under his leadership, the district has experienced a steady increase in academic scores for students, the development of a planned systemic professional development program, gains in technology including 13 grants, collaborative labor agreements that have not only maintained but enhanced the district fiscally, and leadership development and professional collaboration time.

In March, Corona-Norco Unified School District was named one of four American school districts selected as a 2012 finalist for the one million dollar Broad Prize for Urban Education. The Broad Prize for Urban Education is the largest education prize in the country, honoring school districts that demonstrate the greatest overall performance and improvement in student achievement, while reducing achievement gaps among poor and minority students.

Dr. Bechler has extensive training experience in management, leadership, systems, policies and procedures, strategic planning, labor relations and developing collaboration and teamwork within organizations. He is well known for developing trusting relationships, team building and resolving organizational conflict. His academic work includes teaching adjunct classes at the university level and consulting with educational institutions, business and other organizations. He was recently named the 2012 California State Superintendent of the Year by the Association of California School Administrators.

Dr. Bechler received a Bachelor's Degree in social work from Azusa Pacific University, a Master's Degree in Educational Administration from California State University, Los Angeles and his Doctorate of Education from Claremont Graduate University.

Dr. Bechler was born in Saginaw, Michigan and raised in South Central Los Angeles. He has traveled extensively throughout South America, New Zealand, Australia, and Mainland China playing basketball. He resides in Upland with his wife Karen and together they have three children and two grandchildren.

In light of all Kent Bechler has done for the students, parents and communities of Corona and Norco, it is only fitting that he be honored as he retires from the School District. Dr. Bechler's tireless passion for education and public service has contributed immensely to the betterment of our communities and I am proud to call him a fellow community member, American and friend. I know that many community members are grateful for his service and salute him as he retires and moves onto the next phase of his life.